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Public Denied Facts by Edmonton Journal

Paper Adopts Jingo Tactics

The Southam Press

(THE EDMONTON JOURNAL)

Refused to Publish the Letter Repro-
duced on the following Pages

The Edmonton Bulletin Published
the Letter on the Front Page of
Its Issue of September 9th

PUBLIC DENIED FACTS BY EDMONTON JOURNAL

Editor, Edmonton Journal:

Honourable W. L. Walsh's suggestion and plea in last Saturday's Edmonton Journal—that there should be wide public discussion, conducted “calmly, intelligently and without prejudice,” of the legislation recently passed by the Province and disallowed by Ottawa, because “they are matters of great public concern”—will meet with the thoughtful approval of every citizen sincerely interested in his country's welfare, as well as his own.

The discussion method, in a governmental crisis like the present is alike preferable either to unfairly coercive legislation—whether constitutional or not—or to unfair coercion through threats of prosecution for seditious utterances. Surely there never was a time in the world's history when the editing of a newspaper called for such care, tact, intelligence and transparent honesty as at present—when, through the failure of our educational system to equip our people with the means for understanding current history, politics, finance and economics—the burden has fallen so largely on the public press.

Freedom of the press is thus exceeded in importance and value, only by its responsibility in leading public thought, honestly and intelligently.

The present revolt by Alberta was not caused by her alleged flouting of the Canadian constitution. It is merely evidenced thereby.

Cause Not Constitutional

The cause which occasioned, and which lies at the root of the present crisis, is not constitutional in its nature at all. It is legislative.

It began with the first session of the federal parliament of Canada when parliament passed the Bank Act, and in doing so diverted and surrendered its sovereignty into private hands, for private purposes and profit, in the form of a monopoly of control over Canada's currency issue and the public credit.

The monopoly did not arise merely because the chartered banks were allowed to issue a part, or even the major portion, of the nation's currency, though that in itself was, politically and economically, a wrong to the people. It arose, firstly, because other rights were added thereto—namely, the right without governmental regulation, interference, or control, to monetize the personal, commercial and governmental credit of the nation, and its component parts, by the device of creating “cheque money”—(with which the nation's business is transacted, to an extent representing roughly 90 per cent.)—the volume of which can be expanded or reduced by them at will, thus making “money” plentiful or scarce, at will, and making prices of useable commodities and services dear or cheap, at their whim; and secondly, the right to charge interest on that “cheque money,” just as though it were actual currency.

These rights gave the absolute monopoly of control over Canada's economic destiny into the hands of the banking group of private interests who are, as stated, in fact, more than 90 per cent. (by reason of interest chargeable on cheque money) unaccountable to the people's economic trustees, the federal government. These rights also naturally gave the banks at all times complete control over Canada's debt structure, as well as of its credit or purchasing power structure.

Surely that situation must appeal to all to be indefensible.

The result of this arrangement has been that, since Confederation, Canada has had a democratic constitution with a Fascist, autocratic government, under the economic supervision and control of bank monopoly.

Unforgettable Words

In unforgettable words, which should be framed and hung in the law-making chamber of every nation, and which should be burned into the memory and consciousness of every freedom-loving democratic citizen everywhere, the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie

King, an outstanding economist, before the election which brought the present federal government into power under his leadership, said:

"Once a nation parts with the control of its currency and credit it matters not who makes the nation's laws. Usury, once in control, will wreck any nation. Until the control of the issue of currency and credit is restored to government and recognition as its most conspicuous and sacred responsibility, all talk of sovereignty of parliament and of democracy is idle and futile. . . . To regain for the nation what has thus been lost will continue to be the first objective of Liberal effort."

After the election of his party, so pledged, to power, he said in a public speech:

"There can be no mistaking the demand for a restoration to the government of Canada of control over credit and currency issue. As the campaign proceeded the issue of the control by the people of all functions of government, through their representatives in parliament, and not by any other power, became increasingly clear. The electorate has declared that a responsible minister, not organized finance and international money power, is to control in all matters of state."

That statement by Premier King, who, as an economist and statesman, realized more fully than others, its full significance and import, centres in itself, all the present issues involved in Alberta's revolt.

He did not make good his promise through the medium of the Bank of Canada Act machinery. Hence this crisis.

Remedy Known to All

As stated, the trouble is only apparently constitutional. It is actually legislative; and the remedy is known to all to be in the hands of the federal government, who cannot apply it, because of the Fascist control of their banker masters.

No letters from ex-judges or ex-Lieutenant Governors; or speeches by ex-premiers and leaders of His Majesty's loyal opposition; no radio addresses by groups of 81 businessmen (who are at least as prominent through their political activities as they are for their business sagacity); no clamorings from uninformed or misled Boards of Trade or Chambers of Commerce members; no explanations of the mechanics of creation of "cheque money" by eminent British economists travelling through Canada; and no broadcasts by bankers, who will confine themselves doubtless to a discussion of the mechanics of banking, their usefulness as a commercial convenience, their good intentions, and their safety provisions—why shouldn't they be safe with the nation "under" them?—who fail to take into account, and to understand and explain the situation, as expressed by Premier King—can accomplish any useful purpose.

The crux of the matter is there. The issue is joined. Are the citizens of Alberta freemen or serfs?

Someone recently defined democracy as "That form of political administration in which the people get no better government than they deserve."

Canada Best Country

Canada, in the writer's opinion, is the best country in the world. Her people are unsurpassed. Democracy with all its difficulties, is still the best form of government for a freedom-loving people. Alberta is fighting for, not against, Canada, its Constitution and its people, in this revolt—a revolt that is born, not of ignorance, but of intelligence; and sired by necessity. **Alberta is merely leading in Canada's battle for democracy.** Canada herself is at the crossroads of her destiny. Let her people stand firm.

A. L. MARKS.

407-8 Empire Block,
Edmonton, Sept. 8, 1937.

Letter Published by the Edmonton Bulletin, August 28th, 1937

An Unacknowledged Letter

Editor, Bulletin: On August 10th the writer sent the enclosed letter to Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King, Premier of Canada.

Having supported his government in the 1935 election in reliance upon his election pledges, the courtesy of an acknowledgment was deemed reasonable whether the explanation was satisfactory or not.

The people should know how those of us who worked and voted for his election, now feel about the present situation.

A. L. MARKS.

Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister,
Ottawa, Canada.

Dear Mr. King:

Edmonton's recent unique legislative activities must have shocked Ottawa nearly as much as Ottawa's continued inactivity on the same question has disappointed and disheartened the West.

Alberta's misguided and desperate attempts to secure for her citizens as a life-sustaining necessity, an increase in her people's purchasing power in view of Ottawa's failure therein, has resulted in the present legislation.

The writer opposed the Social Credit idea of monthly "dividends" not because relief from the present situation was not required, but because that group was proposing to grant purchasing power in a way that seemed beyond the province's constitutional powers to accomplish, whereas you, on behalf of the Liberal party of Canada, to which I belong because I believe in a minimum of tariff barriers to trade, and which I helped as local organizer at election time, had given a definite pledge on behalf of the Liberals of Canada, to remedy the long standing financial and economic injustice to the Canadian people due to the shackles imposed upon commercial and economic progress by the Bank Act which farms out the national credit to private interests for their profit rather than for the nation's welfare.

Your pledge, given in parliament in 1934 and which formed the chief plank in the Liberal platform when they were returned to power under your leadership is widely known and well remembered. It is as follows:

"Once a nation parts with the control of its currency and credit it matters not who makes the nation's laws. Ursury, once in control, will wreck any nation. Until the control of the issue of currency and credit is restored to the government and recognized as its most conspicuous and sacred responsibility, all talk of sovereignty of parliament and of democracy is idle and futile . . . To regain for the nation what has thus been lost will continue to be the first objective of Liberal effort."

That pledge is incorporated in the speech from the throne reported on page 17 of the 1936 Hansard, after your government took office, in the following words:

"The control of credit, and the issue of currency, being public matters of direct concern to every citizen, it is intended, at the present session, to ask parliament to make such changes in the ownership and control of the Bank of Canada, as may be necessary to give to the government a predominant interest in the ownership as well as effective control of the bank."

In the 1936 session of parliament you mentioned for example the development of the tourist trade as a proper and desirable activity of the National Employment Commission. Mr. Bennett agreed, and there was general parliamentary and other agreement on the subject.

That meant highway construction—of necessity involved the spending of money.

What has happened in that regard?

Alberta has the finest scenery in the world but it can't be observed because of bad roads.

In this connection it will be noted that the changes you requested in the set-up of the Bank of Canada were made which enabled your government to control the country's credit and to issue the necessary currency to accomplish on a wide front the building and improving of national highways.

Why did you want the government to have power of control over credit and the issue of currency if that power was not going to be exercised for the people's benefit?

The 1936 session of parliament produced a number of earnest voices insistent that such power be restored to the government and used.

What happened to those voices?

Why were Tucker, and McGeer, and Stitt, and others who last year were insistent upon the people's rights being exercised, silent in the 1937 session? What assurance did you give that induced them to remain silent in the face of an evergrowing necessity for action?

The people are asking this and they insist on knowing.

As you are recognized personally as an outstanding authority on economics, your election pledge had more weight than that of a person not so equipped. As you had an unimpeachable private record your word was accepted.

The only suggested explanation of your inertia since then, in the face of a condition of increasing need, would appear to be lack of courage.

Is that the trouble? Or do you now doubt your estimate of existing conditions, and the correctness of your remedy? Or, again, is it your purpose to make the Bank of Canada a useful adjunct to the chartered banking system (to repeat the words of the general manager of the Royal Bank of Canada in his address to the bank shareholders at their annual meeting in January, 1934)?

If you were correct, as we still confidently believe, when are you going to do something about it? You can't wait forever, because people's lives and their living—their hopes for the future are at stake. Old people, too old to get work if it could be had, and too young to get the meagre old age pension—are sick with defeat. Middle aged people, if employed, find their tenure of employment less and less secure and their remuneration diminishing while living costs rise. If they are unemployed, their spirits are utterly broken by the sense of helplessness and, worse still, of uselessness which grips them. Young people cannot make plans for their life work or for marriage or homes or families of their own, and the spark of ambition is quenched.

Desperate people are apt to take desperate measures and go to any extreme to maintain their God given right to live. And where only the outworn, criminally conceived system, which your government has both the power and a specific mandate from the people to replace, stands in the way of this right, how can they be prevented or blamed for doing so, if you continue to refuse to act?

The time for effective, constructive, intelligent action is overdue.

What are you going to do about it?

The hopes and the prayers of a stricken people are yours as you let your conscience direct your intelligence to effective action in this crisis.

Awaiting your explanation and reply, I am, sir, on behalf of myself and all western Canadians,

Yours sincerely,

A. L. MARKS.

407-8 Empire Block, Edmonton, Alberta.